

Last Steps – Week 2
“Listen to Him”

Welcome to CHC! I want to thank each of you for being here today.

There is a lot going on and we would love for you to jump in.

The Loop - Easter – Baptisms – Mission Trip – Student Beach Camp

There is several ways for you to be connected here at City Hope.

As a matter of information and a prayer request...I want to ask you to pray for our next steps as a church. The Lord continues to bless us with growth and we are fervently seeking His will for what's next.

Looking at land and buildings...all options are on the table.

Last week we kicked off a brand-new series called **Last Steps**. We are looking at some of the last steps of Jesus' life as it leads us to Easter Sunday.

We believe, ***Following the last steps of Jesus leads us to the first steps of new life.***

We started last week by looking at the question Jesus asked His disciples. And the most important question that each of us will have to answer...who is Jesus?

Jesus is what sets Christianity apart from every other religion. He is the Messiah. The chosen One who came to earth for the sins of all men. He is fully God and fully Man.

He was killed but rose from the grave 3 days later.

I feel led to say this... If you find yourself struggling to follow Jesus or find your footing with the Church or a Christian faith because of some past hurt or bad experiences - we are so thankful you are joining us.

We believe the Last Steps of Jesus' time on earth tells a story and shows all of us the way to a new life, promising forgiveness, peace, and freedom from all the missteps in our own lives.

And while we hope this week helps you to see Jesus in a whole new way, we hope even more that you will want to take your next step in following Him.

Today we are going to look at one of the most remarkable things God did while Jesus was on this earth. Go with me to Matthew 17.

Reminder, Matthew gives us his account of all that took place during Jesus' journey.

Let's stand in honor of the reading of God's Word.

Matthew 17 | After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother John and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. ² He was transfigured in front of them, and his face shone like the sun; his clothes became as white as the light. ³ Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with him. ⁴ Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it's good for us to be here. If you want, I will set up three shelters here: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." ⁵ While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased. Listen to him!" ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown and were terrified. ⁷ Jesus came up, touched them, and said, "Get up; don't be afraid." ⁸ When they looked up they saw no one except Jesus alone.

Pray

This is one of those stories you read and you're like what in the world is going on? There is so much here, and I want to attempt to break it down. (As always, let me encourage you to take this home and feed on it. This time we have together today is just the appetizer)

The chapter and verse division were not there like we have today....it wasn't until the 15th and 16th century until this happened.

Chapter 16 and 17 as we have it were really just a completion of one another. So the last verse of 16 and the 1st verse of 17 are connected.

16.28 | ²⁸ Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.

17.1-2 | After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and his brother John and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. ² He was transfigured in front of them, and his face shone like the sun; his clothes became as white as the light.

Matthew uses the word transfigured.

Transfigured – verb which means to transform. English word is metamorphosis. This denotes the idea of a complete change. An inside and out change. Not just an outward change.

They were witnessing the glory of Jesus. The eternal Son of Man.

They are seeing the glory that Jesus set aside to come into the world as a man.

Don't miss this...Vs. 1 says Jesus led them. They would have never experienced Jesus if they didn't follow Him.

Am I following Jesus where he wants me to go? What is He asking me to do. Am I missing out on experiencing Jesus because I'm not following Him where He wants me to go?

They experienced the glory of Jesus. This is a huge event and a big deal.

Why did God do this? The way seems to be that they (the disciples) needed a demonstration to impact them. They needed to know how powerful and gracious and good this Jesus was.

They were starting to get it, but they needed a powerful happening that could only be explained by...it was God.

So Jesus is transformed right in front of their faces but that wasn't it.

Vs. 3 | Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with him.

Why is this such a big deal? Why these two guys? Moses and Elijah represented so much to the Jewish people.

"Law of Moses" – There was such a connection to the people. He was the embodiment of what it means to be connected to the law. He was the law giver. The Torah is referred to as the Law of Moses.

Elijah was the "prophet of all prophets" he was called up by God. He was revered as the greatest of all prophets.

Together they represent the terms that the Jews used to talk about the Bible.

We say, what does the Bible say? = The Jews would say, What does the law and prophets say?

Peter, James, and John had likely been raised hearing stories about these two men and now they are face to face with them.

Then Peter opens his big mouth... **4 Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it's good for us to be here. If you want, I will set up three shelters here: one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."**

Then we have Vs. 5 and this is so important for us today. **5 While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased. Listen to him!"**

This is the reason for the transfiguration --- these 3 words --- Listen to him. God made the statement for the disciples to understand the role of Jesus in their lives.

I want to get real practical for a few minutes this morning. **Whose voice do I love the most?**

We are all listening to someone or something. Whose voice has the most influence in my life?

When troubles come. When big decisions are in front of you. When wisdom is needed. Whose voice do you love the most?

Who or what you listen to matters mightily. It's crucial to identify who or what you're listening to.

Illustration:

Emma – Nice preach brother.

Marleigh – Trash

Sissy – (waves)

It's vital that our worth and identity does not come from anything other than what God says.

Please hear this and bring this into your heart today....

Jesus wants to speak to you. The reason we have this Bible is because He wants to speak to you. The reason God started churches is so that he could speak to you. The reason He chose some to be preachers and teachers is to speak to you. The reason Jesus modeled a life committed to prayer is so that He can speak to you.

Jesus wants to speak to you...listen to Him.

What about the times in my life when I feel like He's silent? I want Him to speak but I'm not hearing anything.

So often we want God to tell us every single step of every single day...but the reality is, we probably wouldn't listen anyways.

Direction from God comes when you develop a relationship with God.

Let me show you what I mean by this relationship.

One of the Bible's most informative images of Jesus is as the Good Shepherd. Part of that image involves His leadership or lordship of the flock.

Jesus expresses that role by saying, "My sheep hear My voice." Only the Lord's true sheep follow and obey Him because they know and recognize His voice.

John 10.27 I My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.

He is the Good Shepherd...He has good intentions for you.

The shepherd's goal is to keep them safe. To care for them. To help them be successful in breeding.

He is all about care, safety, nourishment...when the shepherd speaks its good.

Church, somebody needs to hear this today.

God's voice doesn't provoke fear, worry, or anxiety.
God's voice doesn't cause confusion.
God's voice doesn't shame me for my past decisions.

There are a lot of voices today.

Living emersed in Christ puts us in a place to recognize the familiar voice.

God sounds like what he wrote.

Psalms 119 – God's word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

It's a light...It's a sword...It's bread and water.

God never stops speaking.

Listen to Him.

Proverbs 2.6 | For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

My marriage is really, really tough, what should I do...Listen to Him.
My kids are really acting out, what should I do...Listen to Him.
I'm not really fulfilled in my current job, what should I do...Listen to Him.
I don't know where to go to college, what should I do...Listen to Him.
I'm faced with this incredibly tough decision, and I don't know what to do...Listen to Him.

Maybe you're here this morning and you've stopped listening. You've stopped asking for God to speak.

It's time to start listening again.

Concerning your finances...Listen to Him.
Concerning your church attendance...Listen to Him.
Concerning your family...Listen to Him.

God wants to be your guide not your Uber driver.

Conclusion:

In His last steps on earth, Jesus showed his disciples something amazing.

Leading up to the cross...this was a big deal. But look what He says in verse 9.

Matthew 17.9 | As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, “Don’t tell anyone about the vision until the Son of Man is raised from the dead.”

Jesus knew that once this got out it was going to get ugly. When the rulers started hearing all the crazy stories about who Jesus was, that’s when they ramped up their efforts to kill him.

Jesus knew it wasn’t time for that yet, so he told his guys to keep it quiet.

Jesus spoke and they listened. Notice He didn’t explain, why. We always want to know “why.” Jesus spoke, they listened.

Who are you listening to today?

God speaks through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, Church (people).

Maybe today you’ve realized you don’t hear from God because you don’t have that relationship. You can start it today! This is why we say ***Following the last steps of Jesus leads us to the first steps of new life.***

Gods telling you today...Come follow Me. Begin your relationship with Him so you can know His voice.

Maybe today you’re realizing you’ve been listening to the wrong voices. Listen to Him.

Maybe today you know that God has been speaking to you about something, but you have been putting it off. Listen to Him. Be obedient.

Maybe today you need to recommit your life to listening to Him.

Whatever God is speaking to you about today...will you listen?